

TO : Placement Officers

FROM : Chief, Testing and Training Branch,
Personnel Division

SUBJECT: Nature of Selection Tests and Interpretation of Test Results

DATE: 15 January 1951

1. In general, the tests administered by the Testing Section are divided into two groups--two basic batteries of tests. The first battery is called the Differential Aptitudes Battery and is used principally for individuals under consideration for clerical-type positions. The second battery is the Otis Battery, which is used chiefly for persons under consideration for professional-type positions. While these two groups of tests are the basic batteries used, they are varied and supplemented according to the requirements of specific positions whose qualification requirements might differ slightly from those usually under consideration.

2. Except for a limited number of specific subject-matter knowledge tests used for certain professional-type positions, and tests of specific skills such as shorthand and typing, the tests are general in nature and purport to indicate aptitudes and mental capacity for the level of the particular position considered.

3. All applicants and employees are told in the testing rooms before taking the tests that their test results will not be the sole factor considered in determining their qualifications for placement. Test results are to be used only as a guide for personnel action and always in conjunction with other qualifications indicators.

4. To clarify the test results and aid in their use as guides for actions, the Testing Section has computed normative data for each type of position at different grade levels for each test. Accordingly, the Qualifications Report, which is sent to the Placement Officer for each person tested, indicates, in graphic form, the percentile norm for each test for the grade at which the individual was tested. Similarly, the applicant's or employee's percentile scores are plotted in red over the same coordinates as the norms, so that the Placement Officer may know at a glance in just which fields the subject exceeds the average for his grade and position and in which he falls below the average.

5. The norms are not intended for use as critical acceptance or rejection points. They are to be used, rather, with the specific qualifications of a particular position in mind. Each Placement Officer has detailed information about the positions it is his duty to fill and, likewise, has

considerable data as to the subject's background, education, and experience. He can, therefore, evaluate the test performance in accordance with whatever aptitudes are most important to the position under consideration.

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